



Press Release

Immediate Release

1 March 2024

### **Bristol Brain Injury Hospital Rewarded for Carers Work**

A hospital in Bristol which supports men with brain injuries has been recognised with a national accreditation for the work it does in supporting carers.

Cygnet Brunel, on Crow Lane, Henbury, has been recognised for its effort and commitment to improving the way the service works with carers and families.

The hospital, part of the Cygnet Health Care division, offers care and treatment to men affected by an Acquired Brain Injury (ABI) or Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). It has now achieved the one-star accreditation, meaning staff have successfully demonstrated their commitment to making a difference to the lives of carers.

In 2023, when four other Cygnet Health Care services were accredited, the organisation became the first independent provider of health and social care services to be recognised under the Triangle of Care initiative.

The team at Cygnet Brunel have undertaken rigorous self-assessments to demonstrate how they are embedding the Triangle of Care standards and their commitment to ongoing improvements and clear carer involvement.

The Triangle of Care is an alliance between carers, service users and health professionals. It aims to promote safety and recovery and to sustain wellbeing in mental health by including and supporting carers.

There are an estimated seven million unpaid carers in the UK, 13% of whom support people with mental health conditions. These carers can provide vital insight into the treatment and condition of those they care for. Carers Trust's Triangle of Care partnership plans to harness that knowledge in an alliance between unpaid carers, those receiving care, services and mental health professionals.

Stephanie Coxon, Cygnet Health Care Operations Director for the South West, said her staff had worked exceptionally hard to gain the accreditation and showcased their commitment to transforming lives.

She added: "This is a tremendous achievement for Cygnet Brunel and is testament to the hard work and strong commitment of staff throughout the service to keep carers at the heart of our service delivery.

"We really recognise and value the contribution of carers and without including them in our care plans, recovery for the individual would be a lot more difficult. Carers are a big part of the Cygnet family and play an integral role in the wellbeing and long-term recovery of those in our care.

"Achieving this accreditation really demonstrates that the team at Cygnet Brunel have been able to provide a compassionate and safe environment for our carers where they feel informed, engaged and supported as much as possible.

"I know Cygnet want to build on this achievement and is committed to ensuring more Cygnet services gain the Triangle of Care accreditation in 2024."

The Triangle of Care was initially developed to improve mental health acute services by adopting these six principles:

- Carers and the essential role they play are identified at first contact or as soon as possible thereafter.
- Staff are 'carer aware' and trained in carer engagement strategies.
- Policy and practice protocols regarding confidentiality and sharing information, are in place.
- Defined post(s) responsible for carers are in place.
- A carer introduction to the service and staff is available, with a relevant range of information across the care pathway.
- A range of carer support services are available.

Triangle of Care Programme Lead at Carers Trust, Sharon Spurling, commended the work and effort being done at Cygnet hospitals to improve the lives of carers.

She said: "Undertaking the Triangle of Care requires commitment from all levels of an organisation to honestly report how the standards are met and to acknowledge where improvements are needed. The Cygnet hospitals have shown that their work supports wider system change for how carers are recognised and supported as equal and expert partners in care".

The Triangle of Care accreditation is one of many initiatives Cygnet has worked on to support families and carers as they deal with the range of emotions and questions they experience when a loved one is in need of mental health care.

Cygnet recently partnered with Black Belt Advocacy to provide a new innovative service to support carers with access to an independent advocate. This is available to any carer who has a loved one staying in a Cygnet mental health hospital, specifically those within Cygnet's Health Care division. An advocate will help the carer to express their views and make sure their voice, opinions and experiences are properly heard.

The organisation also recently launched the Cygnet Carer, Family and Friends Charter, making its pledge to support carers in the best way possible. The pledge, co-produced by members of the Cygnet Carers Network and members of the Cygnet Senior Management Team, sets out the priorities on how it will work with carers moving forwards.

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**Notes to Editors:**

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